

Overview

This standard covers undertaking care of individuals' with urinary catheters. It is applicable in any care setting where an individual has a urinary catheter in position.

This standard involves emptying catheter bags, providing catheter hygiene and removing urinary catheters, as and when directed by a competent practitioner.

This standard does not cover insertion of urinary catheters.

All of these activities must be undertaken using an aseptic technique and following relevant guidelines and procedures.

Users of this standard will need to communicate effectively to meet individuals' needs and wishes and work in line with health and safety legislation, policy and practices.

Performance criteria

You must be able to:

- P1. identify and agree the roles and responsibilities of yourself and others in undertaking care for individuals with urinary catheters
- P2. provide support to the individual, ensuring that you respect their rights and wishes relating to their privacy, beliefs and dignity
- P3. establish consent and access information on undertaking care for individuals with urinary catheters
- P4. confirm all equipment and materials for urethral catheter activity is appropriate to the procedure and fit for purpose
- P5. ensure the individual is positioned in a way that will:
 - a. ensure their safety and comfort
 - b. facilitate urinary catheter hygiene
 - c. facilitate removal of the urinary catheter
- P6. carry out the urethral catheter activity:
 - a. at an appropriate time according to the individual's plan of care
 - b. using appropriate techniques
 - c. using equipment in line with manufacturer's instructions
 - d. in a manner which optimises the individual's comfort and dignity and minimises pain and trauma
- P7. observe the individual throughout the activity, recognise and report any condition or behaviour which may signify adverse reactions to the activity and take the appropriate action
- P8. ensure the urinary catheter and drainage system are:
 - a. functioning correctly
 - b. securely attached
 - c. securely positioned in a way that prevent discomfort and promotes dignity of the individual
- P9. ensure the individual is made comfortable following urethral catheter activity and dispose of waste according to organisational procedures
- P10. empty drainage bags in accordance with procedures
- P11. measure and record urinary output whenever necessary at agreed intervals, or as directed

Undertake care for individuals with urinary catheters

P12. observe urinary output for any change in appearance and promptly inform the appropriate member of the care team

P13. complete all relevant documentation required for implementing undertaking care for individuals with urinary catheters

Knowledge and understanding

You need to know and understand:

- K1. how to access and interpret all relevant work instructions, legislation, guidelines, policies, procedures and protocols needed to undertake care for individuals with urinary catheters
- K2. the scope and limitations of your own competence, responsibilities and accountability as it applies to your job role
- K3. specific procedures for reporting issues which are beyond your competence, responsibilities and accountability
- K4. the principles, practice and procedures associated with informed consent
- K5. the needs of individuals including issues relating to dignity, confidentiality, and privacy
- K6. why individuals should be supported and informed about the nature of the urinary catheter activity
- K7. the concerns and worries which individuals may have in relation to urinary catheterisation
- K8. the contra-indications which suggest that you need to stop and seek help and advice and how these may differ for different individuals, conditions and those from different ethnic groups
- K9. the adverse effects which may occur during and following procedures and how to identify and deal with these
- K10. the effects of having a urinary catheter in position on the individual's comfort and dignity, and ways of minimising any adverse effects
- K11. the anatomy and physiology of the bladder and urethra related to urinary catheter activities
- K12. the normal appearance and content of urine
- K13. potential abnormal appearance and content of urine depending on the individual's presenting medical condition
- K14. how aseptic technique contributes to the control of infection
- K15. the potential sources of contamination when undertaking urinary catheter activity and appropriate measures to reduce or deal with them
- K16. the types of pathogens specific to the urinary system
- K17. the potential consequences of contamination of urinary catheters and drainage systems
- K18. the equipment and materials required for urinary catheter activity

Undertake care for individuals with urinary catheters

K19. why resources should be prepared before you start the activity

K20. the importance of maintaining the correct level of cleanliness for urinary catheter

K21. the importance of following procedures for urinary catheter activity exactly as specified, and the potential effects of not doing so

K22. the importance of packing up used equipment and materials and covering receptacles containing urine prior to leaving the immediate care area

K23. the importance of ensuring that the individual is made comfortable following the procedure / activity

K24. how and where to dispose of:

a. used equipment and materials

b. urine

K25. the importance of ensuring catheter drainage systems are:

a. safely positioned to prevent ascending infection and accidental damage

b. carefully positioned to maintain the dignity of the individual

K26. how to complete and safely store all relevant documentation in accordance with organisational requirements

Undertake care for individuals with urinary catheters

Developed by Skills for Health

Version Number 3

Date Approved 13 Feb 2026

Indicative Review Date 13 Feb 2031

Validity Current

Status Original

Originating Organisation Skills for Health

Original URN SFHCHS9

Relevant Occupations Health and Social Care, Health and Social Services Officers, Health Associate Professionals, Health Professionals, Health, Public Services and Care, Healthcare and Related Personal Services

Suite Clinical Health Skills

Keywords Care, urinary, catheters
